

*Millions could benefit from this life saving research*

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(Washington, D.C.) - Congressman Albio Sires voted today to expand scientists' access to embryonic stem cell lines. This legislation, that was passed by the Senate earlier this year, will go directly to the President's desk. S. 5, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act, would expand the federal funding of embryonic stem cell research by lifting the restrictions on the embryonic stem cell lines that can be used for federally funded research.

"By authorizing additional stem cell lines, we will eliminate restrictions on the scientific process and give patients and their families a ray of hope," said Congressman Sires. "More than 100 million Americans suffer from debilitating diseases that have the potential of being alleviated or cured, if only experts had access to additional resources."

Most of the stem cell lines authorized for federally-funded research under the restrictions imposed by President Bush in 2001 are no longer useful for research. This bill allows funding for research on embryonic stem cells regardless of the date of their creation and for those that are generated from embryos discarded by fertility clinics. S. 5 also establishes an ethical framework that must be followed in conducting this research under the guidance of the National Institutes of Health.

"We are doing everything we can in Congress to fight Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, diabetes and other illnesses. We must allow the development of what the scientific community has suggested: the possibility of a cure. This bill takes an ethical approach to stem cell research so that the nation can benefit from outstanding scientific discoveries in this exciting area of research," said Congressman Sires.

The Stem Cell Enhancement Act is supported by more than 500 organizations and faith-based groups, including the American Medical Association, AARP, and the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

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